

05/16/2023 Notes
Health Equity Advisory Commission

Chair: Rev. Mark Hughes

Notes from last meeting:

- Put a copy in the chat and reviewed the notes from the last meeting

Public Comment

- Kheya suggested moving public comment to the end so that people who listen to the meeting can comment at the end
- Mark was thinking of doing both beginning and the end
- RFP- what does that acronym stand for? Request for Proposals and Kirsten explained the state rules for this process
 - o Looking for some administrative support

Budget

Background: Xusana gave a background. As of three weeks ago our budget 180,000 and we've spent about \$2,000 per diem. If you want to get paid- send Xusana those forms. We have permission to carry that money into the next fiscal year.

State Budgeting Process

- Kirsten explained overall the process in the legislature
- We didn't get any appropriation on either side (house or senate)
- Asked for \$1.57 million – proposal, Office Health Equity and Community Grants
- Conversations with leadership and house and senate in the committee of conference the Senator Baruth had spoken to Senator Kitchel, came to understanding that legislature had proposed the office and the compromise there are two pots of money set aside for HEAC and Office of Health Equity. Expectation that this group, a report by January 15th and specifically address where the office of health equity shall reside, describe how we will use the money for community grants. \$250,000 appropriations for office of health equity. Built into the state base budget. Other pot of money \$500,000 for community grants that would be available.
- After July but before the beginning of the year, potentially money could be released prior to that time
- Health equity grants and sustaining the staff – health dept had been hiring a director of health equity too. How much can we soften the landing with the CDC grant ending
- Comments: Discussion how we would fund the ongoing operations of the equity commission as well as the community engagement and

community grants program and standing up the office of health equity. Kirsten explained question came up- VDH conversation (budget) they had put out equity grants and the budget of VDH is completely separate from this funding we're talking about and the CDC grant separate from that too.

- Kheya- talking about funding grants as a group once the office is formed we should look at the existing grants that came from VDH to communities first and that there is another granting process that has also happened. Good conversation for us to have. Different types of equity, very complex thing that we as a group should dig into
- Getting our administrative and legal support solidified first will be important

RFP

- Was in process last October
- Conversation of the practicality of that RFP and the needs and then we decided not to move forward at that time
- Serves as a framework right now regarding the help that we need for ongoing operations
- Kirsten shared the report on screen and reviewed the RFP overall looking for feedback
 - o Minutes, reaching out to participants in advance, facilitate conversations, write up summaries, support co-chairs, interactions with other state leaders with invitations, produce a workplan that draws from the ideas of the subcommittees and development of the legislative report, support subcommittees, support public meetings
 - o Establish a small group to help manage this process – work with Xusana and Melissa (small tweaks), review and then make recommendations to the broader group
 - o Thoughts:
 - Xusana a lot of the contracting goes through Dept of Buildings and Public Services. Could see this going through them. Went over the process
 - o Carryforward conversation: Reached out to finance and after June 30th, an appropriate that lives in the Dept of Human Resources. Will this effect the timing for contract implementation? Xusana will double check.
 - o People interested in helping in this process?
 - Brett Long
 - Kheya Ganguly
 - Xusana Davis
 - Kirsten will help too

Check-ins

Not time for that for everyone: but giving some space on updates

Kell: still looking for an executive director. Just did a health summit at end of April and it was incredible – conference style, community focused training community providers. Pride month coming up and lots of activities in June. Love when community partners come out and table.

Lucy: Incorporating various available. Started the Holland Food Shelf. Able to have three COVID vaccine clinics in Holland. Mohegan education and culture center and provide Title 6 Indian Education. Couple classes for the community and really well received. Funding is an issue, lot of ideas. Just hired a health equity coordinator for the Tribe.

Sandi: ED Federation of Families Mental Health. Peers all with lived experience. Statewide facility network effected by mental health. Representing families that we don't have enough connection with in Vermont. Including poverty. Most of the staff is 55 plus, technology challenged. 2021 were affected of the deaths of Cornelius Fredericks and George Floyd. Focus on not losing staff right now.

We appreciate our community partners!!

Katie Stetler

Vermont Department of Health
Director of Planning

Health in All Policies Task Force

2015 was established. How do we embed health across other agencies? Had taken a hiatus since COVID. When do we bring this task force back?

Having this conversation at the health department

- Internal Conversation in VDH happening on this topic

Mark reviewed our statewide responsibility and how do we build something that has that type of reach and depth

Challenges: now what? Need to do the dance with the state of what might work well for us.

Politics that are involved Commissioners that are represented on this commission- still a dance that goes on around the pre-existing priorities and the prospect of them changing

- What we'd be navigating and is it something we want to make a priority of the HEAC?
- Health in All policies- doesn't have anyone outside of state government on it either
- Any opposition in leveraging this and wake it up?
 - o Have a stronger understanding of the group
 - o When new members come into state government, learn about all the community groups. Interest in learning about these different groups and making the decisions... are you open to that as well?
- Katie- comes from Mass. State government and learning about all the different organizations as well.
- Kell- curiosity of the trickle out of all the programs ending and the prison project. Things that are brewing that will have impacts on our direction. Need to figure out a format to open up those directions and shine a light on what is important.
- Kathie- outsider looking in
 - o Different organizations or groups within the state that are addressing the same issue and not sure of the overlap
 - o Who collects the data that we use to choose moving forward

Meeting adjourned: 2pm